

• Abroad •

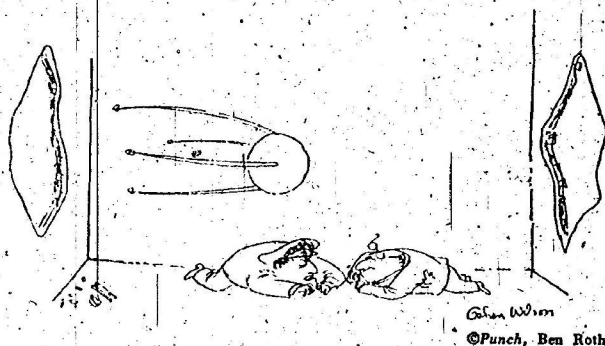
Taipei. Sophisticated observers here are both somewhat puzzled and very pleased at the six-day visit of Juan Lechín Oquendo, Vice President of Bolivia. They are delighted, because Lechín is the first magistrate of top rank to come to Taiwan from Latin America, with which Free China has been endeavoring, with some success, to establish closer relations. They are puzzled because Lechín is a Trotskyist, organizer of the fiercely radical Bolivian mine workers, and real boss of Bolivia's anti-capitalist revolution. Lechín was given an all-out reception; military honors, cheering crowds, state banquets, etc. He pledged Bolivian support to Free China, praised Taiwan's land reform program, and called for economic cooperation. Lechín also made a trip to Quemoy, and declared after a tour of the military installations: "I am as confident as the commanding general on Quemoy that the island can be defended."

Ipoh, Malaya. To qualify as candidates for parliament, local citizens must surmount the same ancient ordeal that tested chiefs, wizards and witch doctors. It is described in a recent report to the Italian journal *Borghese*: "The test which aspiring Ipoh deputies must pass is as simple as it is arduous: they have to swim across a crocodile-infested river. The 'good' representatives of the people manage to make it safe and sound to the far shore, because their supporters beat off the voracious reptiles with long poles. The 'bad'—those without adequate popular support—end up being bitten (a security squad is supposed to prevent, but alas not always in time, graver mishaps), and thus their political careers are finished."

Geneva. The European Left is swooning with anticipation at the advent of the new American Administration. British Laborite R. H. S. Crossman, in a widely printed column from Washington: "The mood of Washington [is] wonderfully exhilarating. For eight years it had been a dreary place, purged of intellectual distinction. . . . Last week it was celebrating not merely the end of a cultural vacuum (Arthur Miller, as well as Robert Frost, was an honored guest) but the return to government of a vast store of talent that had been exiled for eight years to the universities." The influential international edition of *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, hailing the appointment of Edward R. Murrow to "an exceptionally distinguished administration": "Mr. Murrow's greatness lies in moral courage as much as in technique. At a time when politics, entertainment, and even the universities cowered in terror of Senator McCarthy, Mr. Murrow dared to challenge him. The collapse of McCarthyism was the result of many factors . . . but Mr. Murrow's courage was one of the chief. It is good to see such a man play a direct part in the government of his country."

Stanleyville. The struggle between the Gizenga-Lumumba-Communist government centered here and the Kasa-

vubu-Mobutu government in Léopoldville is driving soldiers' pay to fantastic levels. Mobutu recently gave all his soldiers a minimum rank of corporal, with pay of 4,000 Belgian francs (\$80.00) a month, to meet Gizenga's bid. Stanleyville then raised to 7,000 francs. In Kivu, many Mobutu troops defected when Gizenga threw in a 10,000-franc bonus. The Léopoldville government is diverting funds from all other operations to hold its own in this competitive bribery.



"How long will it be until the damned thing stops orbiting?"

London. The British railways share all the troubles of ours plus outright nationalization. The "Railway Conversion League" has come up with a remarkably simple solution: complete physical liquidation of the entire railway system. The League has drawn up a detailed Ten Year Plan showing why and how the railways should be transformed into roads, after the manner of the Pennsylvania and Maine turnpikes in the States. The figures prove that roads could handle far more traffic, both passenger and freight, than the railways now do. Cost per mile is only a tenth that of highways built from scratch. The state already owns the right of way, so no new land from Britain's small and crowded surface would be needed. The intensively developed British railway network goes directly into and through all cities—the most expensive and difficult sections of modern highways. Sidings and marshaling yards can be used for parking.

Bologna. Theological as well as scientific circles are profoundly disturbed by the experiments reported by the little known Prof. Petrucci. Working on certain problems of immunology, sterility and sex determination, along lines initiated by Professors Thibaut at Jouy-en-Josas and Etienne Wolf at Nogent-sur-Marne (both in France), the Petrucci group has achieved test tube fertilization of human ova and development of the embryo for as long as 29 days. By a remarkable new photographic technique, every stage of the process is shown in microscopic detail. Embryologists await the full scientific report that Petrucci promises for later this year. An editorial in *Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican organ, declares: 1) the experiment is immoral; 2) nevertheless, if fecundation takes place, it becomes Petrucci's duty to keep the embryo alive, and it would be homicide, as in the case of abortion, to destroy the embryo deliberately.

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